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**The Unsupervised CIA**

A few weeks ago, former President Harry Truman wrote in this newspaper that he was disturbed by the way the Central Intelligence Agency has been diverted from its original assignment and made into an operational and even a policymaking arm of Government.

The CIA's original assignment, as Mr. Truman explained, was simply to gather information "in its natural raw state" to help the President make decisions. He wanted just the facts, not departmental interpretations or "treatment."

The CIA has drifted so far from that course, said Mr. Truman, that it has become a huge peace-time cloak-and-dagger operation, and is seen abroad as "a symbol of sinister and mysterious foreign intrigue."

Disquieting news this week indicates that the CIA, along with the State Department, may also have become a nesting place for Communist cells, both in Washington and abroad, and that CIA funds are finding their way into the hands of Communist parties and the Soviet secret police.

The word came from the New York Journal-American, which said it was quoting a Polish-born agent who recently defected to the United States. The story was quickly denied by anonymous Government spokesmen.

The disturbing aspect of both Mr. Truman's criticism and the charge and denial of reported Red infiltration is that nobody except officials and personnel of the vast intelligence agency really knows what is going on inside it.

Congressional supervision is perfunctory. The hush-hush intelligence agency has been enormously successful in keeping information from Congressional watchdogs, but apparently no one knows for sure that its secrets are being kept from this nation's enemies.

The problems of operating an intelligence agency in a free society are complicated, to be sure. The public cannot and should not be told everything the CIA is doing. But the public should be given reasonable assurance that adequate supervision is keeping the huge agency within its assigned sphere and free from Communist infiltration.